

Líng Guī Bā Fǎ

灵龟八法

The Eightfold Method
of the Sacred Turtle

Applying the 8 Trigrams to the
Extraordinary Vessel Treatments

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Published in the United States by Lulu Press Inc.

Disclaimer: The information in this book does not constitute any health or medical advice. It is for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any condition or disease.

Note: This book was originally part of my CEU class on the Líng Guī Bā Fǎ and is intended for informational purposes only.

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Introduction

Acupuncture in the 21st century is largely focused on Western empirical science, a continuance of the reductionist theory that has dominated science since Newton. Meaning can only come from an analysis of the parts of the system and how they are affected or influenced by various stimuli along various pathways (chemical, neural, hormonal, etc.). However, acupuncture is more closely related to the quantum physics of Planck, Einstein, and Bohr.

The human body is not a machine composed of separate parts and pieces, but a whole unit, no part separate from the whole. And humans are not separate from nature, but are a part of nature, and as such influence and are influenced by the various cycles and rhythms of nature.

This is the philosophy behind chronotherapy; treating patients in specific ways at specific times in accordance to the energy cycles of nature. The concept of treating patients at specific times for optimal results was first mentioned by Zhang Zhong-Jing (142-210 CE) in the Shang Han Lun (Han dynasty)¹ and chronotherapies were an integral part of Chinese medicine from the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) until the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). Since the founding of the People's Republic of China (1949) much research has been done on the efficacy of chronotherapy.²

There are many and varied theories and treatments pertaining to chronotherapy. One of these techniques stands out from the rest and was considered by Xu Feng and Yang Ji Zhou (both of the Ming dynasty) to be a premier treatment. This work is an attempt to explain this technique, the *Ling Gui Ba Fa (Eightfold Method of the Sacred Turtle)*.

Chapter 1 – History

Ling Gui Ba Fa, “The Eightfold Method of the Sacred Turtle”, also known as “The Techniques of Adopting the Eight Gua in the Extraordinary Vessels”, is an acupuncture chronotherapy utilizing the Confluent points of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels. It is based on treating the patient with certain acupuncture points at certain times of the day. The various theories of chronotherapy developed during the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) and were utilized until the Qing dynasty (1644-1912), when Western medicine theory and pharmaceuticals were introduced to China. Recently there has been a resurgence of interest and research into these treatments in China and elsewhere.

The origin of these treatments is not known. Many of the traditions of Chinese medicine were passed orally from master to student, and most were not originally written. The oldest text we have, the *Huang Di Nei Jing (the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Medicine)* speaks of the unity of humans and nature. “Every individual’s life is intimately connected to nature.”³ The theories of chronoacupuncture are based on the belief that nature and humans correspond to each other. No entity can exist outside of nature, nature influences all living beings, and all beings adapt to the ever-changing natural environment. “Acupuncture should follow the rule of the celestial and the terrestrial and keep in conformity with the time of day.”⁴

At certain times the qi flows in the channels and at other times it pools at certain points. Treatment according to the circadian clock is to be done during the period respective of the main organ involved for excess conditions and during the subsequent two-hour period for deficient conditions. As an example, the time of the Lung is 3:00 – 5:00 AM, and Lung excess syndromes are to be treated during this time while the qi of the Lung waxes, and Lung deficiency conditions are to be treated between 5:00-7:00 AM when the Lung qi wanes. As such, this treatment theory is not conducive to modern lifestyle. I don't know any acupuncturist, or patient for that matter, that would be available for treatment of a Lung pathology between 3:00 AM and 7:00 AM. However, there are alternative chrono-therapy applications which are effective and can be utilized in the modern clinic.

In the Song dynasty, the 10 Celestial Stems and the 12 Terrestrial Branches were first mentioned and eventually combined with the Chinese calendar that had been in use since the Xia dynasty (2205-1766 BCE) to create the calendar that is still in use today. The 10 Celestial Stems are representative of the energy of Heaven, symbolized by the Wu Xing (Five Phase) elements of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, combined with the theory of yin/yang. Each of the five elements has either a yin aspect or a yang aspect. For example, yang wood would be symbolized as a tree while yin wood is bamboo. Yang fire would be a furnace while yin fire would be a candle. The combination of

yin/yang aspects to the five elements makes the 10 variations that are the Heavenly Stems.

The 12 Terrestrial Branches are representative of the energy of earth and are symbolized by the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac. The division of 12 is not only applicable to the months of the year, but also the 12 two-hour time divisions of the day. When the 12 branches are juxtaposed against the 10 stems, this results in a repeating cycle of 60, called a sexagenarian cycle. This will be explained in detail later. The cycle of 60 pertains primarily to the year, the month, the day, and the hour when in relation to the Sacred Turtle technique.

He Rou-You, also in the Song dynasty, was the first to use the term “chronoacupuncture” in his book *“The Classic of Zhi Wu Liu Zhu, (Midnight Midday Flowing and Pooling),”* a chrono-therapy which is based upon the flow of yin and yang energies in the twelve primary channels in relation to the Stems and Branches. In the latter 13th century (Yuan dynasty), Dou Han Qing first stated, in his book *Zi Wu Liuzhu (The Midnight Midday Flowing and Pooling)*, “the eight points where two or more channels intersect are the essentials of acupuncture.” These eight points are the Confluent points of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels, the “eight points where the vital energy flows and pools.” Dou is credited with pairing the Confluent points of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels into the Master/Couple points we know today; the Dai Mai (GB 41) with Yang Wei Mai (SJ 5), Chong Mai (SP 4) with Yin Wei

Mai (PC 6), Du Mai (SI 3) with Yang Qiao Mai (BL 62), and Ren Mai (LU 7) with Yin Qiao Mai (KD 6). He believed these eight points could treat 213 symptoms and diseases. Dou said that this knowledge came from a book given to him, and written by, the sage hermit Shao Shi. This book has since been lost.

Xu Feng, in 1495 (Ming dynasty), mentions the Ling Gui Ba Fa for the first time in “*Comprehensive Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*” (*Zhen Jiu Da Quan*). While he discussed several chronotherapies, he believed the Ling Gui Ba Fa to be one of the most relevant and crucial forms of this type of therapy. He believed the eight confluent points could treat 243 symptoms and diseases. (Xu Feng is also credited with the addition of the 12th Heavenly Star to Ma Dan-Yang’s original 11 Heavenly Star Points.)

Yang Ji-Zhou, in 1601 (Ming dynasty), explained the Ling Gui Ba Fa in detail in “*Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion*” (*Zhen Jiu Da Cheng*). He expounded upon, and included in volume five of his book, the theories previously presented by Xu Feng over 100 years earlier. It was not uncommon for a physician to copy an earlier medical book and add to it from their experience, and the majority of Yang’s book is a direct quote of Xu Feng’s previous work. It is this book from which the intricate practice of determining the open Confluent points to be used at specific times will be discussed.⁵

Also during the Ming dynasty, the physician Li Yan referred to “the eight points which are the confluent locales of Extra Channels and Regular Channels” and that “366 points of the whole body are dominated by 66 points, 66 points are dominated by Eight Confluent Points.”⁵ The “66 points” are comprised of the 5 Shu-Transport points of the 12 Primary channels (Jing-Well, Ying-Spring, Shu-Stream, Jing-River, He-Sea) plus the Yuan-Source points of the 6 yang channels. The Yuan-Source points of the yin channels are the same as the Shu-Stream point. This is an extremely significant statement – that the entire body can be influenced by only eight acupuncture points.

What is the rationale for stating that these 8 Confluent points can have a significant influence on the entire body? The answer lies in the development of the energetic channels. During the first two to three weeks of mitosis, there is no regulatory system; no organs, no blood vessels, no bones, no nerves, only cells communicating and dividing, to eventually become specialized tissues and systems. As the embryonic development continues, the embryo folds creating the endoderm, mesoderm, and ectoderm. The development of the mesoderm forms what Western medicine calls the “primitive streak,” the centerline of the embryo. This is the Chong, the Thoroughfare Vessel. It is the first energetic channel to form.⁷

The Chong is the center core of the physical body. This can be equated to the primitive streak during gastrulation, as the mesoderm

(Chong), ectoderm (Du), and endoderm (Ren) develop. These three became the center core of the energetic body. Binding these core lines together is the Dai, the only horizontal channel in the body. These four establish the basis of the energetic structure of the body. Once this core structure develops, the yin and yang qi begin to move throughout the body, facilitated by the Qiao vessels. Lastly, but just as important, are the Wei vessels, which regulate the flow of qi between the internal and external, balancing yin and yang within the body. It is the Confluent Points that open and control the Eight Extraordinary Vessels, the original vessels that are the basis for the energetic web of the body. Therefore, they influence and control the primitive unitary energy system of the body.

In the introduction to his translation of “An Exposition on the Eight Extraordinary Vessels” by Li Shi-Zhen, Charles Chase states:

“..the extraordinary vessels nevertheless maintain a degree of autonomy. They are not bound to the primary vessels in the same way as the secondary vessels.”

“...each extraordinary vessel exerts its own influence on every channel to one extent or another, and no single extraordinary vessel may be conceptualized in relation to any one primary channel. In very practical terms, each exercises its regulatory effect on the entire body. They are the matrix that provides the gross structure for the rest of the channel system.”⁸

With the advent of Western medicine and drugs during the Qing dynasty, chronotherapies were used less and less. Then with the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, interest in

chronoacupuncture was renewed. In 1956, Wu Zhao Xian wrote “*On Difficulties of Zi Wu Liu Zhu*” and one year later, Cheng Dan An, et al, compiled “*The Method of Zi Wu Liu Zhu.*” This resulted in much research over the following years into both Zi Wu Liu Zhu and Ling Gui Ba Fa for various illnesses for which regular acupuncture treatments were less effective.

Chapter 2 – Stems and Branches

The 10 Celestial or Heavenly Stems are the representation of the energy of Heaven. The Heavenly energy flows downward to influence the earth. The 12 Terrestrial or Earthly Branches represent the energies of Earth and flow upward in response to Heaven. Humans are the catalyst between the Heavenly and Earthly energies, and as such, are influenced by them. Heaven, Humans, and Earth are the Three Powers in Chinese philosophy. Within the human body there are also three domains referred to as the Three Treasures; Jing (Essence), Qi (Vitality), and Shen (Spirit). The Three Treasures are influenced by the Three Powers.

In utilizing the Ling Gui Ba Fa, the 10 Stems and the 12 Branches are used to determine which of the 8 Confluent points is “open” or active at a given time. This was explained in detail by Yang Ji Zhou in *The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (Zheng Jiu Da Cheng)*, written in 1601. We begin with an understanding of the 10 Celestial Stems.

The 10 Stems are the elements of the Wu Xing (Five Phases) combined with the theory of Yin/Yang. The Five Phases represent the cycle of change and interdependence affecting all life. The Five Phase elements, wood, fire, earth, metal, water, are symbols for the transition through which everything proceeds. Wood contains the energy of fire, fire burns the wood to create ash (earth), within the earth we find metal,

when metal is exposed to the air overnight condensation (water) is produced, and water nourishes plants (wood) to grow. For example, spring (wood) becomes summer (fire) which becomes fall (metal) which becomes winter (water) which again becomes spring. The earth element is seen as the transformative power between each season. In the Chinese calendar each season is three months long with the third month of each season being the time of the earth element. In other words, starting with spring the months of the year would be represented as wood, wood, earth, fire, fire, earth, metal, metal, earth, water, water, earth.

Yin and yang, originally describing the shady or sunny side of a hill respectively, represent the dualism of all aspects of life. They are the apparent opposites that are truly interdependent, yet mutually producing. This concept can be applied to everything as long as it is within the same sphere of influence. For example, night and day are a yin/yang pairing, and winter and summer are a yin/yang pairing, however, night and summer are not as they are not within the same spheres of influence. Yin and yang cannot be separated from each other, just as one can't be alive (yang) without eventually dying (yin), and one cannot die (yin) without having been alive (yang).

Other correspondences apply to the theory of the Wu Xing:

Element	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
Direction	East	South	Center	West	North
Plants	Sprout	Growth	Transformation	Harvest	Storage
Life	Birth	Development	Transition	Decline	Death
Season	Spring	Summer	End of Each	Autumn	Winter
Climate	Wind	Heat	Dampness	Dryness	Cold

Since Wood is the element of spring and new beginnings, the Stems start with wood. Each element has a yin or a yang nature, so the Five Elements plus Yin/Yang theory make the 10 Stems.

10 Heavenly Stems

S1	Jia	wood	yang
S2	Yi	wood	yin
S3	Bing	fire	yang
S4	Ding	fire	yin
S5	Wu	earth	yang
S6	Ji	earth	yin
S7	Geng	metal	yang
S8	Xin	metal	yin
S9	Ren	water	yang
S10	Gui	water	yin

The 12 Earthly Branches represent both the 12 months of the year as well as the 12 two-hour time division the Chinese have used for millennia. However, the seasons are viewed differently in the Chinese calendar than they are in the West. The beginning of the seasons in the Western calendar coincide with the solstice and the equinox. Spring starts on the spring equinox, summer on the summer solstice, autumn on the autumnal equinox, and winter on the winter solstice. However, the Chinese calendar starts the seasons differently.

The solstices are seen as the culmination of the energies of yin and yang, the time when one wanes and the other begins to wax. As such, summer solstice is seen as the waning of yang and the emergence of yin, which will culminate with the winter solstice, the waning of yin and the emergence of yang. Therefore, summer solstice is considered 1 yin and winter solstice is 1 yang. There are 6 yin months and 6 yang months during the 12 months of the year. Winter solstice belongs to the month of December (1 yang) and Summer solstice belongs to the month of June (1 yin).

The spring is 3 yang in the Chinese calendar and is associated with the month of February. This is the time of the Chinese New Year, a time of new beginnings, and the first month of the year (actually, Chinese New Year occurs on the second new moon following the winter solstice, which is usually in February, but sometimes in January). Autumn is 3 yin and is associated with the month of August.

The Branches begin with the yang numeration, for instance, December is 1 yang as well as Branch 1 and June is 1 yin, so becomes Branch 7. The 12 month cycle is viewed as follows:

Twelve Earthly Branches

Order	Month	Pin Yin	Yin/Yang	Element	Season	Branch
1	February	Yin	3 yang	wood	Spring	B3
2	March	Mao	4 yang	wood	Spring	B4
3	April	Chen	5 yang	earth	Transform	B5
4	May	Si	6 yang	fire	Summer	B6
5	June	Wu	1 yin	fire	Summer	B7
6	July	Wei	2 yin	earth	Transform	B8
7	August	Shen	3 yin	metal	Autumn	B9
8	September	You	4 yin	metal	Autumn	B10
9	October	Xu	5 yin	earth	Transform	B11
10	November	Hai	6 yin	water	Winter	B12
11	December	Zi	1 yang	water	Winter	B1
12	January	Chou	2 yang	earth	Transform	B2

The first branch is the 11th month, the time of winter solstice (Dec.), winter, the water element. The third branch is the 1st month (Feb.), spring, the wood element. The seventh branch belongs to the 5th month, the time of the summer solstice (June), summer, the fire element. The tenth branch belongs to the 8th month (Sept.), autumn, the metal element.

Each season is 3 months long with the first 2 months relating to the respective element (spring-wood, summer-fire, autumn-metal, winter-water) and the last month of each season relating to earth-transformation. Therefore, the third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth months relate to earth.

When the 10 Stems are juxtaposed against the 12 Branches, this creates a cycle of sixty or a sexagenarian cycle (gān zhī). Starting with Stem 1 aligned to Branch 1, the pairing proceeds until Stem 10 aligns with Branch 10. However, there are only 10 stems, so the next pairing becomes Stem 1 with Branch 11, then Stem 2 with Branch 12, Stem 3 with Branch 1, and so on. For example, a recent example of an S1B1 day was January 6th, 2023 and S1B1 won't align again until March 7th, 2023, 60 days later. This applies to the four pillars of time in Chinese culture, the years, months, days, and hours. A sample of the cycle is as follows and would continue until S1B1 match up again.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Stem/Branch</u>
1- 6-2023	S1B1
1- 7-2023	S2B2
1- 8-2023	S3B3
1- 9-2023	S4B4
1-10-2023	S5B5
1-11-2023	S6B6
1-12-2023	S7B7
1-13-2023	S8B8
1-14-2023	S9B9
1-15-2023	S10B10
1-16-2023	S1B11
1-17-2023	S2B12

This also applies to the hours of the day. The 12 Branches correspond to the 12 two-hour time division of the day, beginning with 11:00 PM to 1:00 AM as the 1st Branch. The 10 Stems of the day are paired yang and yin together based on the Five Unities, for example,

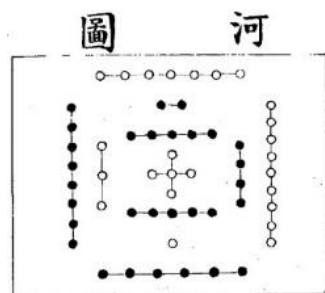
Stem 1 Jia (yang) is paired with Stem 6 Ji (yin), Stem 2 Yi (yang) is paired with Stem 7 Geng (yin), etc. The Stem of a given day during a specific time division gives us the stem of the hour. This is shown on the following chart. For example, on a Jia day between 9-11 AM (Si branch), the hourly Stem and Branch would be Ji Stem (S6) and Si Branch (B8), notated as S6B8. See the following chart:

		DayStem				
Hour Branch		Jia / Ji	Yi / Geng	Bing / Xin	Ding / Ren	Wu / Gui
23 1	Zi	Jia	Bing	Wu	Geng	Ren
1 3	Chou	Yi	Ding	Ji	Xin	Gui
3 5	Yin	Bing	Wu	Geng	Ren	Jia
5 7	Mao	Ding	Ji	Xin	Gui	Yi
7 9	Chen	Wu	Geng	Ren	Jia	Bing
9 11	Si	Ji	Xin	Gui	Yi	Ding
11 13	Wu	Geng	Ren	Jia	Bing	Wu
13 15	Wei	Xin	Gui	Yi	Ding	Ji
15 17	Shen	Ren	Jia	Bing	Wu	Geng
17 19	You	Gui	Yi	Ding	Ji	Xin
19 21	Xu	Jia	Bing	Wu	Geng	Ren
21 23	Hai	Yi	Ding	Ji	Xin	Gui

Chapter 3 – The He Tu, Luo Shu, Nine Palaces, and Bagua

The first legendary emperor of China, Fu Xi (ca. 4000 BCE), is said to have witnessed a “dragon horse” (long ma) rise out of the Yellow River with a specific pattern on its back. This pattern is referred to as the He Tu or River Diagram.

It was this pattern, according to legend, that inspired Fu Xi to diagram the theory of yin/yang, with the white circles representing yang and the black circles representing yin. All the white circles are odd in number, all the black circles are even in number, and this gave rise to odd numbers being yang and even numbers being yin. Yang therefore is represented by one line (odd) —, while yin is represented by a broken line (even) — —. Fu Xi then arranged these two lines in groups of three, called a trigram. There are eight different arrangements that can be made into trigrams, and this is called the Bagua (8 Divine Symbols). The trigram arrangement of Fu Xi is called the Pre-Heaven arrangement.



He Tu



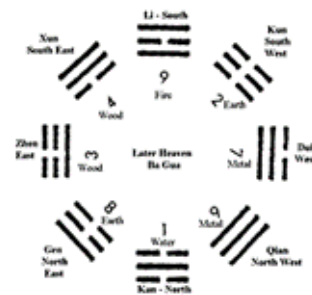
Pre-Heaven Bagua

Centuries later, according to legend, the third “Sage King” Yu, who is credited with controlling the flood waters that plagued China and was possibly the ruler of the first Chinese dynasty, the Xia (2205-1766 BCE), is said to have witnessed a “dragon turtle” (long gui) rise out of the Luo River with a specific pattern on its shell. This pattern is a different arrangement of what Fu Xi allegedly saw and is referred to as the Luo Shu or the Luo diagram.

It also represented the odd/yang numbers as white and the even/yin numbers as black. During the Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE), King Wen is said to have rearranged the Bagua into what he called the Post-Heaven arrangement.



Luo Shu



Post-Heaven Bagua

The Post-Heaven Bagua was also the basis of what is known as the Nine Palaces, or the Magic Square.

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

The Nine Palaces is pregnant with meaning. My teacher told me if you understand the Nine Palaces, you'll know everything there is to know about Chinese medicine. Nine represents the head, one represents the feet, two and four the right and left shoulders respectively, seven and three the right and left sides, six and eight the right and left legs. Nine is the south, one is the north, seven the west, three the east, and remainder the respective intercardinal directions. Five is the center.

The Nine Palaces also represent a season, a month, a direction, the Bagua, the Ten Stems, the Eight Extraordinary Vessels and their Confluent points.

Xu Feng, in his book “Comprehensive Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion” (Zhen Jiu Da Quan), assigns each of the squares to the Confluent Points of the Eight Extraordinary Vessels. The origin for him doing so is not known.

1	BL 62
2	KD 6
3	SJ 5
4	GB 41
5	KD 6
6	SP 4
7	SI 3
8	PC 6
9	LU 7

Chapter 4 – Calculating the Open Point

To determine which of the 8 Extraordinary Points is open according to the Ling Gui Ba Fa, one must first determine the stem and branch of the respective day.

NOTE: Appendix B is a simplified chart for quickly determining the Stem and Branch of the day without having to do the full calculation.

1) The following chart shows how many days have passed by the end of each month. Use it to determine the number of the day in question in accordance to the 365 day year. Add 1 for Leap Years.

Jan 31	Feb 59	Mar 90	April 120	May 151	June 181
July 212	Aug 243	Sept 273	Oct 304	Nov 334	Dec 365

Example: June 21st, 2020

May has completed 151 days + 21 in June + 1 (Leap Year) =
June 21st, 2020 was the 173rd day of the year

Divide 173 by 60 to determine the number of cycles that have occurred since Jan 1, 2020.

$173 / 60 = 2.88$; 2 complete cycles have occurred.

Multiply 60 by 2 = 120 (number of days in 2 complete cycles)

173^{rd} day – 120 = 53 (6-21-20 was the 53rd day of the 3rd cycle)

2) Calculating Stem and Branch of the Day

Reduce 53 by 10 (number of stems) = 3 is the remainder

Reduce 53 by 12 (number of branches) = 5 is the remainder

Find the Stem and Branch of New Year's Day in the chart below

Stem & Branch New Year's Day							
LEAP	YEAR						
2000	S5B7	2001	S1B1	2002	S6B6	2003	S1B11
2004	S6B4	2005	S2B10	2006	S7B3	2007	S2B8
2008	S7B1	2009	S3B7	2010	S8B12	2011	S3B5
2012	S8B10	2013	S4B4	2014	S9B9	2015	S4B2
2016	S9B7	2017	S5B1	2018	S10B6	2019	S5B11
2020	S10B4	2021	S6B10	2022	S1B3	2023	S6B8
2024	S1B1	2025	S7B7	2026	S2B12	2027	S7B5
2028	S2B10	2029	S8B4	2030	S3B9	2031	S8B2

Jan. 1, 2020 was a S10 B4 Gui Mao day.

10 Heavenly Stems

S1	Jia	wood
S2	Yi	wood
S3	Bing	fire
S4	Ding	fire
S5	Wu	earth
S6	Ji	earth
S7	Geng	metal
S8	Xin	metal
S9	Ren	water
S10	Gui	water

12 Earthly Branches

B1	Zi	Rat	Positive	yang
B2	Chou	Ox	Negative	yin
B3	Yin	Tiger	Positive	yang
B4	Mao	Rabbit	Negative	yin
B5	Chen	Dragon	Positive	yang
B6	Si	Snake	Negative	yin
B7	Wu	Horse	Positive	yang
B8	Wei	Sheep	Negative	yin
B9	Shen	Monkey	Positive	yang
B10	You	Rooster	Negative	yin
B11	Xu	Dog	Positive	yang
B12	Hai	Pig	Negative	yin

Jan. 1, 2020 was a S10 B4 Gui Mao day.

Using the remainder calculation above, and the Stem and Branch charts, start with S10 Gui as number 1 and count forward 3 stems. That makes June 21 a Yi Stem 2 day. Start with B4 Mao as number 1 and count forward 5 branches. That makes June 21 a Wei Branch 8 day.

Therefore, June 21, 2020 was an S2 B8 Yi Wei day.

3) Calculating the Stem and Branch of the Hour

Using the chart on page 17, look up the day stem and the corresponding hour branch. See the example on the next page:

On a Yi day at 12:00 noon, the hour stem is Ren S9 and the hour branch is Wu B7.

June 21, 2020, at 12:00 PM was a Yi Wei S2B8 day, at the RenWu S9B7 hour.

4) Calculating Open Confluent Point

Use the Substitution Chart below as follows:

DAY							Sub #
Elem	Stem		Branch				
Earth	S1	S6	B2	B5	B8	B11	10
Metal	S2	S7	B9	B10			9
Wood	S4	S9	B3	B4			8
Fire	S3	S8	B6	B7			7
Fire	S5	S10	B12	B1			7

HOUR		Sub			Sub
Stem		#	Branch		#
S1	S6	9	B1	B7	9
S2	S7	8	B2	B8	8
S3	S8	7	B3	B9	7
S4	S9	6	B4	B10	6
S5	S10	5	B5	B11	5
			B6	B12	4

Find the Stem and Branch numbers for the day and hour, and the respective Substitution Numbers.

Example: Day: S2 substitution number is 9

B8 substitution number is 10

Hour: S9 substitution number is 6

B7 substitution number is 9

Add the substitution numbers: $9 + 10 + 6 + 9 = 34$

On yang days, reduce the substitution total by 9. On yin days reduce the substitution total by 6. If the result is 0, on yang days it becomes 9, on yin days it becomes 6.

Yi S2 is a yin day (odd number stems are yang, even number stems are yin), so reduce by 6.

Result: $[34 - 6 = 28]$ $[-6 = 22]$ $[-6 = 16]$ $[-6 = 10]$ $[-6 = 4]$

Find number 4 on the Magic square correspondence chart below:

1	BL 62
2	KD 6
3	SJ 5
4	GB 41
5	KD 6
6	SP 4
7	SI 3
8	PC 6
9	LU 7

The open Confluent Point on June 21, 2020 at 12:00 noon was GB 41, paired with SJ5.

Note: The above calculations are based upon the longitude of the treatment location in the Northern hemisphere. For accuracy, Eastern Standard Time vs Daylight Saving Time should be considered, as well as the true solar time.

Chapter 5 – Treating Patients with Ling Gui Ba Fa Technique

According to the Ling Gui Ba Fa, the open point is the “ruling point” and its coupled point should also be selected for treatment. In the above example (Chapt. 4) the open point is GB 41 and should be needle first followed by SJ 5. There are three ways this treatment can be applied, two more conducive to the modern clinic than the first.

Application at Appointed Times

When the patient calls to schedule an appointment, the confluent point which treats the respective condition is determined as well as the day and two-hour period in which the point will be open. For instance, if the patient complains of abdominal pain and diarrhea, the appropriate point(s) to use would be SP 4 and PC 6 (see Appendix A, pg. 37). The treatment would be scheduled on the day when SP 4 is open. However, this method is not relevant to the modern clinic as SP 4 may not be open for several days or in the middle of the night, neither convenient for the patient as well as the practitioner.

Application at Random Times

This is the easiest way to use the Ling Gui Ba Fa. Regardless of the patient’s chief complaint and which point would be most effective as described above, the open point at the time of the patient’s appointment is to be used. As always, its coupled point is to also be used because the treatment is tapping into the primordial energetic

matrix of the body. For example, if the patient's appointment is on an S3B3 Bing Yin day between the hours of 1:00 and 3:00 PM, the open point is GB 41, the primary point, and should be paired with its coupled point, SJ 5 (see Open Point Table, page 33). This can be a stand-alone treatment, or more effectively, used as described next.

Application at Random Times with Other Points

This is either done using first the open Confluent point(s) and then adding systemic points to reinforce the energetic effect of the Confluent points or adding empirical points to the Confluent point treatment. In either case, the number of needles used can and should be kept to a minimum. For example, patient's chief complaint is low back pain. Use the "open" point first, then its coupled point, then add BL 23, BL 40, and KD 3. Or if the patient complains of shoulder pain, use the "open" point first followed by its coupled point, then add ST 38, the empirical point for shoulder pain.

Chapter 6 - Ling Gui Ba Fa Case Studies:

1) Female, age 32 CC: epigastric pain for more than three years.

Symptoms worse with emotional upset. Pain also in the hypochondrium with frequent belching and constipation.

T: red sides, thin white coat

P: wiry

Diagnosis: Liver qi stagnation invading Stomach

First treatment: day was a Ji You (S6B10) day between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM or Geng Wu (S7B7).

Conversion: $10 + 9 + 8 + 9 = 36$ Ji is a yin day, reduce by 6

6 is remainder, correlates to SP 4 (PC 6), with reducing technique

Second treatment: day was Geng Xu (S7B11) day between 9:00 and 11:00 AM or Xin Si (S8B6).

Conversion: $9 + 10 + 7 + 4 = 30$ Geng is a yang day, reduce by 9

3 is remainder, correlates to SJ 5 (GB 41), with reducing technique

Results: after three treatments patients symptoms abated.

2) Female, age 42 CC: chronic cholecystitis. Intermittent severe pain, upper right quadrant which radiates to the shoulder.

T: red, white coat

P: wiry

Diagnosis: damp-heat in the Gallbladder

Treatment: day was Ding Chou (S4B2) day between 11:00 AM and

1:00 PM or Bing Wu (S3B7).

Conversion: $8 + 10 + 7 + 9 = 34$ Ding is a yin day, so reduce by 6
4 is remainder, correlates to GB 41 (SJ 5), with reducing technique,
needles manipulated every 5 minutes over 40 minutes treatment.

Results: severity of pain decreased, follow-up next day, pain completely gone.

3) Female, age 24 CC: premenstrual pain (lower abdomen) for more than 1 year. Pain occurs 2 days before onset. Menarche at 13, regular every 28 days, 4-5 day moderate flow that is pale red.

T: red sides, thin white coat

P: wiry

Diagnosis: Dysmenorrhea due to Liver blood stasis

First treatment: day was Yi Hai (S2B12) day between 1:00 and 3:00 PM or Gui Wei (S10B8).

Conversion: $9 + 7 + 5 + 8 = 29$ Yi is a yin day, so reduce by 6
5 is remainder, correlates to KD 6 tonify (LU 7 sedate)

Second treatment: day was Bing Zi (S3B1) day between 9:00 and 11:00 AM or Gui Si (S10B6).

Conversion: $7 + 7 + 5 + 4 = 23$ Bing is a yang day, so reduce by 9
5 is remainder, correlates to KD 6 (LU 7) same techniques.

Third treatment: day was Ding Chou (S4B2) day between 7:00 and 9:00 AM or Jia Chen (S1B5).

Conversion: $8 + 10 + 9 + 5 = 32$ Ding is a yin day, so reduce by 6

2 is remainder, correlates to KD 6 (LU 7) same techniques

Results: after third treatment over three successive days, patient pain was alleviated and follow-up showed no pain with the next period.

4) Female, age 32 CC: swelling and pain of the left breast for three months, worse around menstruation and during emotional depression.

SS: palpitations, dizziness, fidgety, irritable.

T: red

P: wiry

Diagnosis: Lobular hyperplasia of the mammary gland due to Liver qi stagnation.

First treatment: day was Yi Hai (S2B12) day between 7:00 and 9:00 AM or Geng Chen (S7B5).

Conversion: $9 + 7 + 8 + 5 = 29$ Yi is a yin day, so reduce by 6
5 is remainder, correlates to KD 6 (LU 7), sedating technique

Second Treatment: day was Bing Zi (S3B1) day between 9:00 and 11:00 AM or Gui Si (S10B6).

Conversion: $7 + 7 + 5 + 4 = 23$ Bing is a yang day, so reduce by 9
5 is remainder, correlates to KD 6 tonify (LU 7 sedate)

Third treatment: day was Ding Chou (S4B2) day between 9:00 and 11:00 AM or Yi Si (S2B6).

Conversion: $8 + 10 + 8 + 4 = 30$ Ding is a yin day, so reduce by 6

6 is remainder, correlates to SP 4 (PC 6), sedating technique

LV 3 added, sedating technique

Results: three treatments over three successive days, follow-up one week later, symptoms completely gone.

5) Female, age 57 CC: “Migraines” since childhood, worse since age 45. Headache actually occipital, starts at the occiput radiates up neck to vertex. Always worse with rainy weather.

T: pale, slightly swollen

P: slippery

Diagnosis: headache due to damp bi syndrome

Treatment day was Wu Chen (S5B5) between 1:00 – 3:00 PM or Ji Wei (S6B8). Conversion $7 + 10 + 9 + 8 = 34$, reduce by 9

Open point correlates to SI 3 (BL 62)

Treatment: SI 3, BL 62 + GB 20, BL 60, GB 41, DU 20

Results: 30 minute treatment after which headache was completely gone. Follow up 1 week later, no further headaches all week.

6) Female, 51 CC: Low back pain which radiates down the right leg to the little toe. Bending over taking clothes out of dryer and walking her 55 lb dog aggravated her back pain. Orthopedic tests for disc involvement were negative.

Diagnosis: low back pain due to qi and blood stasis from overuse.

Open Point correlated to KD 6, (LU 7).

Points added – BL 23, BL 25, BL 26, Shiqizhuixia, BL 32, BL 40, KD 3 (17 needles)

Needles retained for 30 minutes after which patient said back pain was gone. Follow up 17 days later, no pain since treatment.

7) Female, 69 CC: Neck and left shoulder pain for four months. Nothing has relieved pain (chiropractic, acupuncture, PT). Recently diagnosed with anterolisthesis C6 over C7. Patient plans on cortisone injection the following day.

Diagnosis: neck and shoulder pain due to bi syndrome.

Open Point correlated to SP 4, (PC 6).

Points added – GB 20, BL 60, GB 34, SI 14

Needles retained for 30 minutes after which patient said pain was gone. She texted me next day to say she had the best night's sleep in four months.

Appendix A - What the Extraordinary Vessels Treat

Confluent points can be selected to treat by Appointed Time discussed above in accordance to what they specifically treat as follows:

Chong Mai (SP 4) - abdominal pain, stress, anxiety, anger, epilepsy, menstrual disorders, diarrhea

Yin Wei Mai (PC 6) - palpitations, insomnia, epilepsy, acute gastroenteritis, hiccup, vomiting, menstrual disorders, neurasthenia, vertigo

Du Mai (SI 3) - headache, neck pain and stiffness, deafness, tinnitus, congestion of the eye, swelling and pain of the throat, epistaxis, hysteria

Yang Qiao Mai (BL 62) - scapulohumeral periarthritis, eye diseases, lumbago, back pain, headache, aversion to wind, spontaneous sweat

Dai Mai (GB 41) – diseases of the shoulder and neck, migraine, eye diseases, paralysis of the limbs due to apoplexy, headache, pain of the nape and superciliary arch

Yang Wei Mai (SJ 5) – diseases of the shoulder and arms, ear diseases, swelling and pain of the joints of the extremities, cold sensation of the knee

Ren Mai (LU 7) – headache, sore throat, cough, dyspnea, husky voice, hemorrhoids

Yin Qiao Mai (KD 6) – insomnia, sore throat, husky voice, dripping discharge of urine, bleeding hemorrhoids

Appendix B: Treating with Ling Gui Ba Fa

Using the following chart, find the current date and the corresponding Stem and Branch of that day. Each section shows ten days. The top line shows the first day of each 60 day cycle. The chart can be updated using the Stem and Branch of the year (lines 39 -60). Once the Stem and Branch of the day has been determined, use the next chart to determine Confluent point that is “open.”

Year		Day							
1 Jia Zi		1/11/22	3/12/22	5/11/22	7/10/22	9/8/22	11/7/22	1/6/23	3/7/23
2 Yi Chou									
3 Bing Yin									
4 Ding Mao									
5 Wu Chen									
6 Ji Si									
7 Geng Wu									
8 Xin Wei									
9 Ren Shen									
10 Gui You									
11 Jia Xu		1/21/22	3/22/22	5/21/22	7/20/22	9/18/22	11/17/22	1/16/23	3/17/23
12 Yi Hai									
13 Bing Zi									
14 Ding Chou									
15 Wu Yin									
16 Ji Mao									
17 Geng Chen								CNY	
18 Xin Si									
19 Ren Wu									
20 Gui Wei									
21 Jia Shen		1/31/22	4/1/22	5/31/22	7/30/22	9/28/22	11/27/22	1/26/23	3/27/23
22 Yi You									
23 Bing Xu									
24 Ding Hai									
25 Wu Zi									
26 Ji Chou									
27 Geng Yin									
28 Xin Mao									
29 Ren Chen									
30 Gui Si									

31 Jia Wu		2/10/22	4/11/22	6/10/22	8/9/22	10/8/22	12/7/22	2/5/23	4/6/23
32 Yi Wei									
33 Bing Shen									
34 Ding You									
35 Wu Xu									
36 Ji Hai									
37 Geng Zi									
38 Xin Chou									
39 Ren Yin	2022								
40 Gui Mao	2023								
41 Jia Chen	2024	2/20/22	4/21/22	6/20/22	8/19/22	10/18/22	12/17/22	2/15/23	4/16/23
42 Yi Si	2025								
43 Bing Wu	2026								
44 Ding Wei	2027								
45 Wu Shen	2028								
46 Ji You	2029								
47 Geng Xu	2030								
48 Xin Hai	2031								
49 Ren Zi	2032								
50 Gui Chou	2033								
51 Jia Yin	2034	3/2/22	5/1/22	6/30/22	8/29/22	10/28/22	12/27/22	2/25/23	4/26/23
52 Yi Mao	2035								
53 Bing Chen	2036								
54 Ding Si	2037								
55 Wu Wu	2038								
56 Ji Wei	2039						1/1/2023		
57 Geng Shen	2040								
58 Xin You	2041								
59 Ren Xu	2041								
60 Gui Hai	2043		5/10/22	7/9/22	9/7/22	11/6/22	1/5/23	3/6/23	5/5/23

After May 5th, 2023, May 6th, 2023 will revert to #1 Jia Zi and the cycle will continue accordingly.

Appendix C

Using the above table, determine the Stem and Branch of the day to determine the “open” point from the chart below. The open point is the “ruling” point and is to be used with its corresponding coupled point.

Open Point Table 1 (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Stems 1 -30)

	7 to 9	9 to 11	11 to 13	13 to 15	15 to 17	17 to 19
1 Jia Zi	LU 7	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
2 Yi Chou	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5
3 Bing Yin	PC 6	SP 4	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	LU 7
4 Ding Mao	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	BL 62
5 Wu Chen	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5
6 Ji Si	SJ 5	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41
7 Geng Wu	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5
8 Xin Wei	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6
9 Ren Shen	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6
10 Gui You	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6
11 Jia Xu	SJ 5	SP 4	BL 62	PC 6	SP 4	GB 41
12 Yi Hai	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4
13 Bing Zi	SI 3	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	PC 6
14 Ding Chou	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	SJ 5
15 Wu Yin	LU 7	SI 3	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
16 Ji Mao	GB 41	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6
17 Geng Chen	KD 6	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	PC 6	SP 4
18 Xin Si	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
19 Ren Wu	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	KD 6	LU 7	SJ 5
20 Gui Wei	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4
21 Jia Shen	KD 6	KD 6	LU 7	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5
22 Yi You	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6
23 Bing Xu	BL 62	PC 6	PC 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
24 Ding Hai	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	SP 4
25 Wu Zi	PC 6	SP 4	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6	LU 7
26 Ji Chou	SP 4	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
27 Geng Yin	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	SP 4	GB 41
28 Xin Mao	KD 6	SP 4	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5
29 Ren Chen	KD 6	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5	SP 4
30 Gui Si	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5

Open Point Table 2 (7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Stems 31 -60)

	7 to 9	9 to 11	11 to 13	13 to 15	15 to 17	17 to 19
31 Jia Wu	LU 7	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
32 Yi Wei	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5
33 Bing Shen	LU 7	SI 3	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
34 Ding You	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6
35 Wu Xu	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5
36 Ji Hai	SJ 5	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41
37 Geng Zi	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5
38 Xin Chou	GB 41	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6
39 Ren Yin	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	GB 41
40 Gui Mao	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41
41 Jia Chen	SJ 5	SP 4	BL 62	PC 6	SP 4	GB 41
42 Yi Si	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4
43 Bing Wu	SI 3	KD 6	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	PC 6
44 Ding Wei	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	SJ 5
45 Wu Shen	BL 62	PC 6	SJ 5	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
46 Ji You	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4
47 Geng Xu	KD 6	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	PC 6	SP 4
48 Xin Hai	BL 62	KD 6	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
49 Ren Zi	KD 6	LU 7	GB 41	KD 6	LU 7	SJ 5
50 Gui Chou	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4
51 Jia Yin	BL 62	GB 41	PC 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
52 Yi Mao	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	SJ 5	BL 62
53 Bing Chen	BL 62	PC 6	PC 6	SP 4	GB 41	KD 6
54 Ding Si	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	SP 4
55 Wu Wu	PC 6	SP 4	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6	LU 7
56 Ji Wei	SP 4	SJ 5	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5	BL 62
57 Geng Shen	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	SI 3	KD 6
58 Xin You	SJ 5	BL 62	GB 41	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41
59 Ren Xu	KD 6	SJ 5	SI 3	KD 6	SJ 5	SP 4
60 Gui Hai	KD 6	SP 4	GB 41	BL 62	KD 6	SJ 5

Notes:

- 1) *Optimum Time for Acupuncture* by Liu Bing Quan, pg. 11
- 2) *Optimum Time for Acupuncture* by Liu Bing Quan, Chapter IV
- 3) *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine*, trans. by Ni Maoshing, Chapter 25, pg. 101
- 4) *ibid*, Chapter 26, pg. 104
- 5) *The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion* by Yang Ji-Zhou
- 6) *Optimum Time for Acupuncture* by Liu Bing Quan, pg. 74
- 7) *The Extraordinary Vessels Handbook* by Albert Stern, part 3
- 8) *Exposition on the 8 Extraordinary Vessels* by Li Shi-Zhen, introduction by Charles Chase, Miki Shima

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